

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 51

Recognizing the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Antarctic Treaty.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 12, 2009

Mr. TIBERI (for himself, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia, Mrs. DAHLKEMPER, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. FARR, Mr. GORDON of Tennessee, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. INGLIS, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. PETRI, Mr. POE of Texas, and Mr. TURNER) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Recognizing the 50th anniversary of the signing of the
Antarctic Treaty.

Whereas the Antarctic Treaty was signed by 12 nations in Washington, DC, on December 1, 1959, “with the interests of science and the progress of all mankind”;

Whereas the Antarctic Treaty was established to continue and develop international “cooperation on the basis of freedom of scientific investigation in Antarctica as applied during the International Geophysical Year”;

Whereas the Antarctic Treaty came into force on June 23, 1961, after its unanimous ratification by the seven claimant nations (Argentina, Australia, Chile, the French Republic, Norway, and the United Kingdom of Great Brit-

ain and Northern Ireland) and five other nations (Belgium, Japan, the Union of South Africa, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the United States of America), who had collaborated in Antarctic research activities during the International Geophysical Year from July 1, 1957, through December 31, 1958;

Whereas “no acts or activities taking place while the present treaty is in force shall constitute a basis for asserting, supporting, or denying a claim to territorial sovereignty in Antarctica”;

Whereas the Antarctic Treaty established a firm foundation for the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to cooperate during the cold war;

Whereas the 14 articles of the Antarctic Treaty provide an ongoing firm foundation to successfully maintain the region south of 60 degrees south latitude, nearly 10 percent of the Earth, “for peaceful purposes only”;

Whereas the Antarctic Treaty provides an ongoing firm foundation “for nations to continuously meet for the purpose of exchanging information, consulting together on matters of common interest pertaining to Antarctica, and formulating and considering, and recommending to their Governments, measures in furtherance of the principles and objectives of the treaty”;

Whereas the Antarctic Treaty prohibits “any measure of a military nature”, despite the complete absence of indigenous human populations and extreme isolation of the continent surrounded by oceans at the bottom of the Earth;

Whereas the Antarctic Treaty became the first nuclear arms agreement in our world by establishing that “any nuclear

explosions in Antarctica and the disposal there of radioactive waste material shall be prohibited”;

Whereas common interests among the Antarctic Treaty nations facilitated the development and ratification of the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources;

Whereas the Antarctic Treaty now has 46 nation signatories that together represent nearly 90 percent of the human population;

Whereas the scientific basis of international cooperation founded by the Antarctic Treaty offers humankind an institutional precedent for the peaceful governance of international spaces;

Whereas in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the International Geophysical Year, the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate in their concurrent resolutions and the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties in their Edinburgh Declaration recognize the current International Polar Year for its contributions to global science and international cooperation; and

Whereas the International Polar Year program has endorsed the Antarctic Treaty Summit: Science-Policy Interactions in International Governance that will be convened in Washington, DC, at the Smithsonian Institution on the 50th anniversary of the Antarctic Treaty: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That the Congress—*

3 (1) recognizes that the Antarctic Treaty has
4 successfully ensured the “use of Antarctica for

1 peaceful purposes only and the continuance of inter-
2 national harmony” continuously for the past half
3 century; and

4 (2) encourages diverse international and inter-
5 disciplinary collaboration in the Antarctic Treaty
6 Summit to identify lessons and stories from 50 years
7 of international cooperation under the Antarctic
8 Treaty that have legacy value for humankind.

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